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Case WM 128

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

In Re Application of: Andreas Hasselgruber et al

Title: MULTI-PART HARDTOP-VEHICLE ROOF

Hon. Commissioner for Patents
P.O. 1450
Alexandria, VA 22313-1450

July 9, 2003

SIR:

INFORMATION DISCLOSURE STATEMENT - SECTION 1.97(b)

Under the provisions of 37 C.F.R. Section 1.56, and in accordance with 37 C.F.R. Sections 1.97 and 1.98, applicants' representative hereby submits US Patent & Trademark Office Form PTO-1449. Copies of the references cited therein are submitted for consideration in the examination of the above-referenced patent application. It is respectfully requested that they be made of record, along with whatever references the Examiner may find in the course of a search, should the Examiner consider them material to the subject application.

FR 2 791 007 was considered to represent the closest state of the art and has therefore been discussed in detail in the introductory part of the application. It has also been cited in the German examination proceedings.

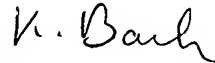
The other references have been cited in the international search report. With the exception of US 6 131 988, they were marked "A" as relating only to background information.

US 6 131 988 was marked "X" with respect to claim 1 and 2. However, claim 1 has been amended with a view to define the invention more distinctly.

The references do not disclose that in a hardtop vehicle roof which is movable between a closed position, in which it covers a vehicle interior, and a storage position and which includes rigid roof shells which, in the closed position, are disposed end to end adjacent one another, at least one of the roof shells includes a center section and side sections which are pivotally connected to the center section and the center sections are displaced in the storage position of the roof shells upwardly relative to the respective side sections so as to be received within one of the roof shells thereby to reduce the volume required for the storage of the roof shells in the storage position thereof.

This Statement is hereby submitted under Section 1.97(b) since it is being submitted concurrently with the filing of the above-referenced application.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "K. Bach", is written over the printed name.

Klaus J. Bach, Reg. No.: 26832

